

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Engineered Glass Products

Chicago Manufacturing Center

Engineered Glass Products and InnerGlow Partner for Sustainable Growth

Client Profile:

Engineered Glass Products (EGP), originally known as Marsco, was among the first manufacturers to produce protective gray glass shields for TV tubes. EGP went on to develop scratch-resistant glass for scanners and is now one of the world's leading producers of heat barrier glass, commonly used in oven doors. EGP's in-house design and engineering team has developed and patented numerous heated-glass technologies. Through a wholly-owned subsidiary, Thermique, the company is commercializing the technology across a wide range of industries including architecture, food service, hotels, office furniture, and transportation. EGP employs 50 people at its facility in Chicago, Illinois. EGP occupies just over 100,000 square feet at two facilities in Chicago and employs 100 people from the south side of the city.

Situation:

As an industry leader in producing energy efficient applications, EGP wanted its manufacturing processes to be as 'green' as its products. To achieve that goal, the company had to find a sustainable way to recycle damaged and broken glass. (Due to its unique properties, heat-treated glass cannot be mingled with regular glass in the recycling process.) Faced with the high cost of transporting the damaged glass, known as cullet in the industry, EGP turned to the Chicago Waste to Profit Network, a program managed by the Chicago Manufacturing Center (CMC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, in collaboration with the City of Chicago Department of the Environment. The Waste to Profit Network operates like a matchmaker, finding ways to transform one company's waste into another company's raw material.

Solution:

Through the Waste to Profit Network, EGP found a match with another Chicago company, InnerGlow Surfaces, which provides environmentally sustainable solutions to interior finishes. Its principal product line is Gilasi, a countertop surface composed of more than 87 percent recycled materials, much of it glass. What Engineered Glass Products saw as a potentially costly problem, InnerGlow embraced as a product development opportunity. EGP's cullet is now a raw material for InnerGlow. Because of the connection made by the Waste to Profit Network, EGP's waste glass is diverted from landfill and InnerGlow is meeting its sustainability goals of using local suppliers and recycled materials. Both companies are contributing to the development of a green product for the home improvement market.

Results:

- * Realized \$30,000 in cost savings, diverting 1,200 tons of glass cullet from landfill.
- * Reduced shipping costs from \$2,000 per truckload to less than \$200.

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- * Found a buyer for cardboard waste, generating new revenue.
- * Contributing to a 'green' environment.

Testimonial:

"Our work with CMC in the Waste to Profit Network allows us to merge two of our most pressing corporate goals: to make a profit and to promote the use of green products made through environmentally friendly processes."

Philip Gordon, Vice President, Sales